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SUBJECT: TAJIKISTAN: PEACE PARK DEMARCHE DELIVERED

REF: STATE 107857

¶1. PolOff discussed the creation of a Transboundary Peace Park with Deputy Minister Rustam Latipov at the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection (reftel). Latipov fully supports the creation of the Park and conservation of the Pamirs. Tajikistan will host a multi-national conference December 3-5 aimed at bringing the four countries together to sign a framework agreement that will create the Transboundary Protected Area Commission and four technical working groups. The Tajik government will send senior-level government officials to lead its delegation, including Prime Minister Oqil Oqilov and Foreign Minister Hamrokhon Zarifi.

¶2. PolOff also met with representatives from the embassies of Pakistan, China and Afghanistan in Dushanbe August 7-14 to notify them of the conference and solicit high-level attendance.

Without senior government officials who are able to make decisions, the Peace Park is in jeopardy of stagnating. None of the embassy representatives had heard of the Transboundary Peace Park prior to PolOff's meetings. Representatives of the Pakistan and Afghanistan embassies expressed strong support for the Peace Park and said they would discuss sending high level delegations to the conference with their capitals. The Chinese representative was intrigued by the idea but appeared more cautious. (Note: In the 2006 meeting in Xinjiang, China all countries were prepared to sign the framework agreement except China.) The Chinese Embassy said that it would relay the message to Beijing.

¶3. Russian-translated talking points were delivered to the government of Tajikistan and the Chinese embassy August 17. Post will continue to follow up with the Tajik government and various resident embassies.

JACOBSON